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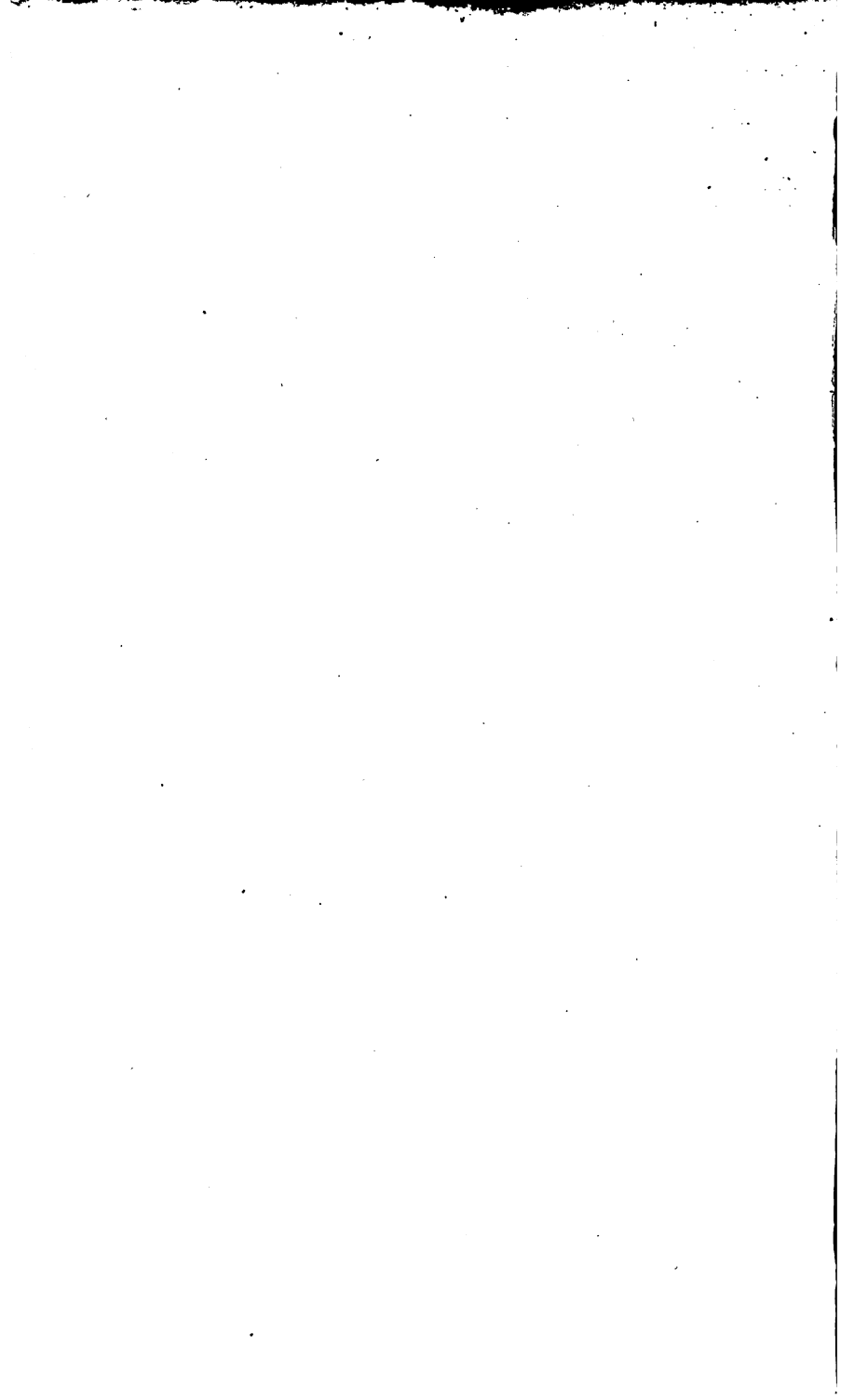
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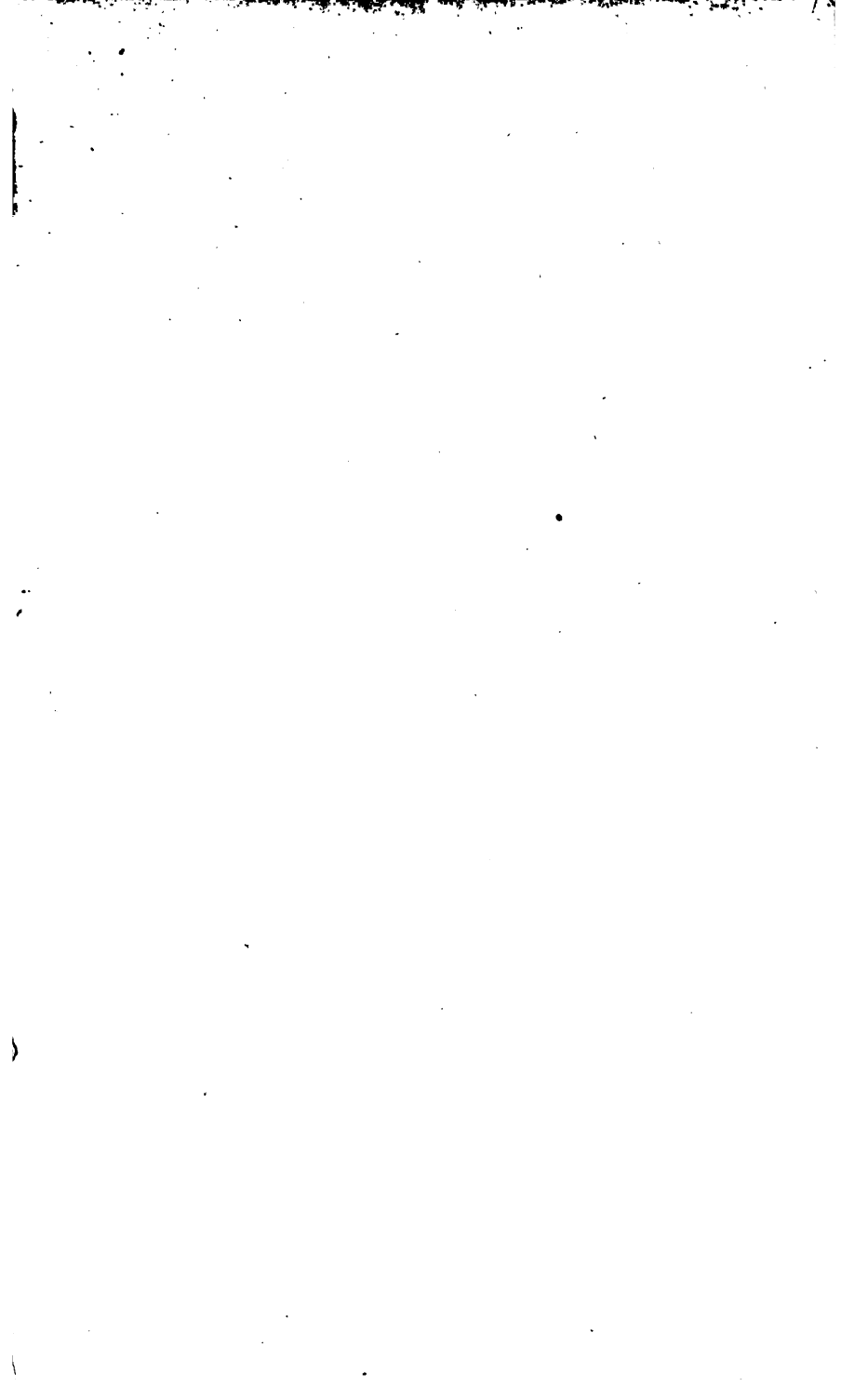
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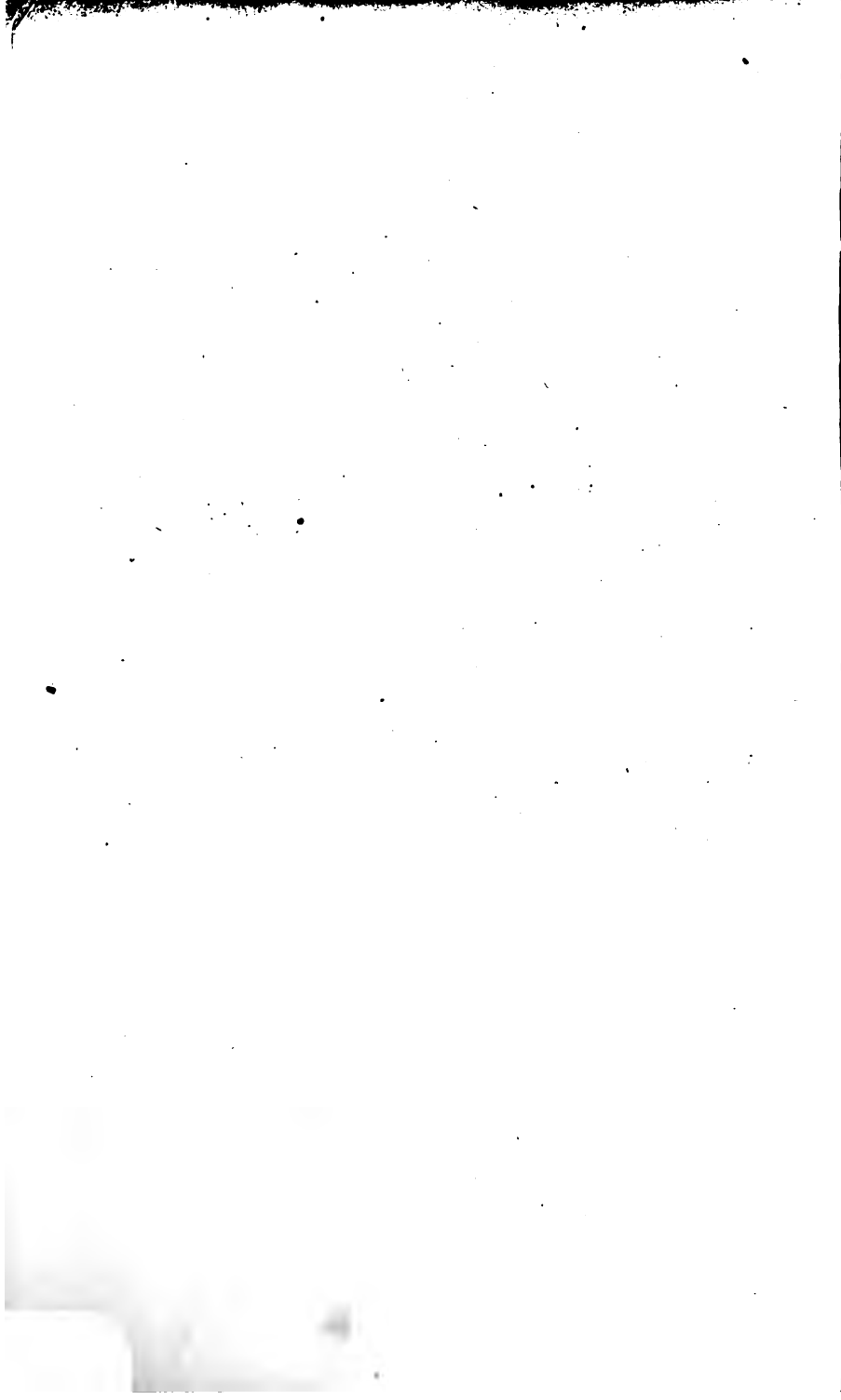
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P O P E :
HIS DESCENT AND FAMILY CONNECTIONS.

NOVEMBER—1857.







P O P E:

HIS DESCENT AND FAMILY CONNECTIONS.

FACTS AND CONJECTURES.

BY JOSEPH HUNTER.

ANCESTRY, whose grace
Chalks successors their way,
SHAKESPEARE.

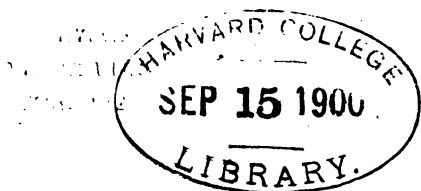
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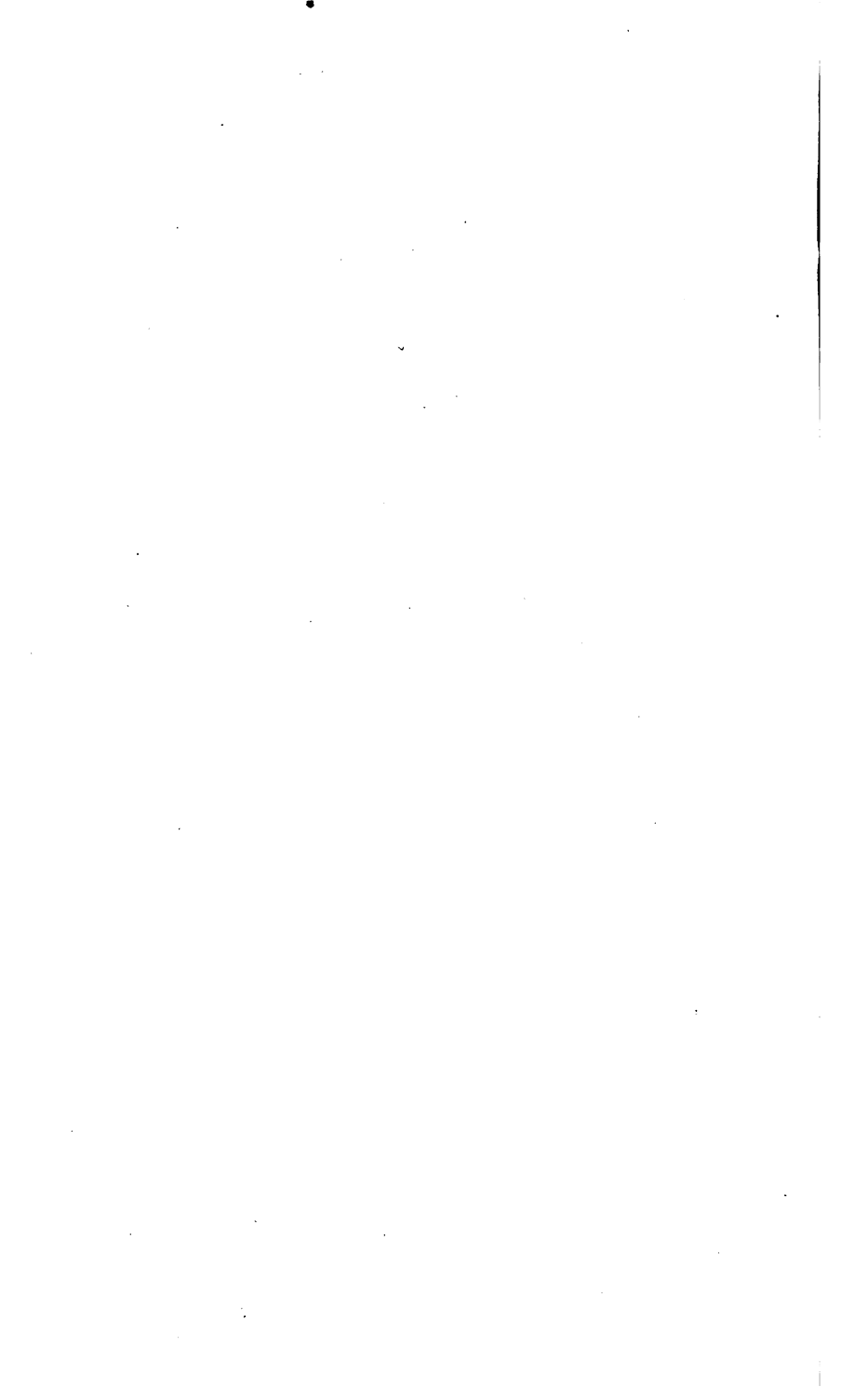


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THE following Tract is an enlargement of the principal portion of an account which I propose to give of POPE, in *Poets and Verse Writers, from Chaucer to Pope: new Facts in their History*—should the public curiosity respecting them call for the publication of what I have collected and written.

OCTOBER 26, 1857.



POPE:

HIS DESCENT AND FAMILY CONNECTIONS.

Two persons of noble birth, who thought themselves insulted in the "Imitation of the First of the Second Book of the Satires of Horace," retorted upon the Poet with a severity not wholly undeserved. Unlike Pope, who had dismissed them both in a line or two, they composed their attacks very elaborately, seeking out everything that could offend him,—defects for which he must be held responsible, and those for which no man can justly be so held.

One of these latter points was, want of *birth*. The lines,

Whilst none thy crabbed numbers can endure,
Hard as thy heart, and *as thy birth obscure*,

are attributed to the Lady Mary Wortley Montague; but Johnson assigns them to Lord Hervey,¹ who attacked Pope in another poem, in which he makes it a charge that he was

¹ Johnson is probably in the wrong. They are printed as Lady Mary's in the collection entitled *The Poetical Works of the Right Honourable Lady M—y W—y M—e*. Dublin: 12mo, 1768, p. 26.

It is rather remarkable that we should find in private documents two ladies whom Pope had made the subject of his severest satire, both manifesting curiosity about the contents of his will. Lady Hervey (Mary Lepell) writes on the 20th July, 1744, respecting one clause in it; but she writes darkly, and the editor of her Letters has not cleared away the obscurity. Lady Mary's curiosity is ex-

a hatter's son, and insults him on the score of the meanness of his family.

These allusions to his origin seem to have galled the Poet more than anything else that was said of him. He was then living in what is called high society, and it was of some importance to him not to be thought meanly bred. Three courses were open to him. He might have assumed to pass over the charge as unworthy his notice: he might have claimed it as a merit to have surpassed his ancestors, and risen to distinction by his own genius, "out of himself drawing his web;" or he might deny the charge altogether. He adopted the last of these courses, and in this he acted wisely and honestly.

pressed in letters perhaps not so well known; at least I copy from the originals. They are addressed to her intimate friend the Countess of Oxford.—"*Avignon*, Aug. 10, 1744.—I hear that Pope is dead, but suppose it is a mistake, since your Ladyship has never mentioned it. If it is so, I have some small curiosity for the disposition of his affairs, and to whom he has left the enjoyment of his pretty house at Twict'nam, which was in his power to dispose of for only one year after his decease." Again:—" *Avignon*, Oct. 15.—I am surprised Lord Burlington is unmentioned in Pope's will. On the whole, it appears to me more reasonable and less vain than I expected from him." It was from Lady Oxford that she had received a copy of the will. In another letter (not of this series) Lady Mary speaks of having converted an old ruined windmill on the heights of Avignon into a belvedere, from which she says there was commanded the finest land prospect she had ever seen; then recollecting what were perhaps the happiest months of her life (for her happiness is to be counted by months, not years), she adds, "except Wharnccliffe." This "belvedere" must have been on the hill on which still stand the cathedral and the Pope's palace, now barracks. The prospect, though magnificent, does not naturally recal the forests and moors of Wharnccliffe. No traces of the "belvedere" are discoverable.

When a defence against such a charge is undertaken, there is an advantage in the difficulty of defining that really undefinable quality called *birth*. There is an *absolute*, and a *relative*, want of it. A rich mercantile family may be a good family when compared with persons of the same class who have been less successful than they; a family owning a good estate in the country is a good family amongst the neighbours; a race of persons eminent in any of the professions may be called a good family. But place these by the side of the ancient aristocracy of the country, who have maintained this position for centuries, and what are they? and let persons even of acknowledged antiquity and elevation be brought into the company of kings and emperors, or even of the great families of the Continent, and they lose something of their lustre:—

A deputy shines bright as doth a king
Until a king be by.

Undoubtedly, Pope could not in this respect compare himself with the Pierreponts and the Herveys; and *to them* his birth would necessarily appear obscure, if they thought at all about it, and chose to take the unkind view. But Pope knew that what was *relatively* true might be *absolutely* untrue. He therefore took the first opportunity of claiming publicly what in his opinion belonged to him.

In the *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*, which was written early in 1733, he speaks of his birth thus:—

Of *gentle blood* (part shed in honour's cause,
While yet in Britain honour had applause)
Each parent sprung—

Then follows his touching notice of his father, and of his mother (who was then living, in her ninety-third year), not

the less genuine for being written in imitation of Horace.
They are handed down for ever as people of

Unspotted names, and venerable long,
If there be force in virtue or in song.

To these lines this note is appended :—" Mr. Pope's father was of a gentleman's family in Oxfordshire, the head of which was the Earl of Downe, whose sole heiress married the Earl of Lindsey. His mother was the daughter of William Turner, Esq., of York : she had three brothers, one of whom was killed, another died, in the service of King Charles ; the eldest following his fortunes, and becoming a general officer in Spain, left her what estate remained after the sequestrations and forfeitures of her family."

In his more formal reply to his noble assailant, he says that his father was a younger brother,—“ that he was no mechanic (neither a hatter, nor, which might please your Lordship yet better, a cobbler), but in truth of a very honourable family, and my mother of an ancient one.”

It happened that while this subject was fresh in the public mind, and within a very few weeks after he had finished his *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*, the death of his mother occurred. This gave him a fair occasion of publicly asserting his claim to a good position in respect of birth. Accordingly, the following notice, which appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for June 1733, we cannot doubt came from himself :—" June 8. Died Mrs. Editha Pope, aged 93, the last survivor of the children of William Turner, of York, Esq., who, by Thomasine Newton, his wife, had fourteen daughters and three sons, two of which died in the King's service in the Civil Wars, and the eldest retired into Spain, where he died a general officer."

Pope had now said all that he proposed to make public; and accordingly we find nothing more concerning his descent in the *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Alexander Pope, Esquire*, published by William Ayre in 1745, the year after the Poet's death. He might, or might not, have been acquainted with the letter to Curl with the signature P. T., in which a person professing to be well acquainted with Pope's family, undertakes to inform Curl respecting them. This letter has, strangely, been attributed to some actual friend of Pope, and even to the Poet himself writing thus anonymously to Curl, with whom he was at the time in open war. Who P. T. specifically was, has, perhaps, not been discovered; but that he was a person with whom Curl had unfair dealings respecting the collection of Pope's letters, will be seen in Mr. Ayre's *Memoirs*, p. 300. The information in this letter has been generally received by later writers on the life of Pope, as worthy of the same acceptance which is yielded to the Poet's avowed statements respecting his family; and, undoubtedly, it proceeds from some one who was acquainted with facts in the history of the family a little beyond those which the Poet himself had divulged. To those facts it adds the following:—That Pope's father had an elder brother who studied and died at Oxford: that the father was himself a posthumous child: that he was put to a merchant in Flanders, and acquired a moderate estate by merchandise, which he quitted at the Revolution, and retired to Windsor Forest, where he purchased a small estate: that he married one of the seventeen children of William Turner, Esq., formerly of Burfit Hall, in Yorkshire: and that two of his wife's brothers were killed in the Civil Wars.

The last clause shows the carelessness with which this

letter was written. It is evidently copied from what Mr. Pope had himself written; but then Mr. Pope's account of the matter is, that one brother was slain, and the other died, in the service of King Charles the First. To what Mr. Pope had said of his maternal grandfather, the writer of this letter adds, that he was of Burfit Hall in Yorkshire. "Burfit" is the country people's pronunciation of Birthwaite, an old seat of the Yorkshire Baronet family of Burdet. I would not say that he may not have been a temporary inhabitant of this house, but it can have been but a short tenancy by Mr. Turner, whose far more proper designation was that which Pope had given him, "of York," where he for the most part resided. The seventeen children is but a repetition of what Pope had himself told us, and which is supported by better evidence than the testimony of this anonymous writer. That he acquired a fortune by merchandise is doubtless true, though, probably, but a small one; but when he says that the elder Pope had been put to a merchant in Flanders, this is at variance with what we are told by a relation of the family (of whom immediately), that it was to Lisbon that he was sent for the purpose, and that there it was that he became a Roman Catholic. That he was a posthumous child is peculiar to this communication. I think I shall show it to be a little uncertain, supposing that his age at the time of his death is truly stated on his monument: of the brother studying and dying at Oxford, also peculiar to the letter, I have seen nothing to support or to disprove.

This will be sufficient to show that there can be no good reason to attribute this letter to Pope himself, or to any person who had received information from him to be given to the world in this form; and, secondly, that in the points where

this communication is at all at variance with what Mr. Pope had himself sanctioned, or professes to carry our information beyond what he had told us, its testimony is to be received, if at all, with great caution.

We may, therefore, be said to receive very little more on this subject from the Poet's contemporaries than what he himself on the one side, and his enemies on the other, chose to communicate. It is quite insufficient for forming a right judgment on the question. There is very little fact, no proof, and no detail. If the point was worth raising at all, it was worth settling: besides that, the curiosity of later times craves more than this, when intent on studying the lives of England's greatest worthies. Dr. Johnson is content to dismiss the subject thus:—"This, and this only, is told by Pope, who is more willing, as I have heard it observed, to show what his father was not, than what he was." But Johnson lived in a century when there was little desire of minute and exact information respecting even the most eminent of our countrymen; and in writing of Pope as of Milton, he has certainly kept himself free from the temptation which besets all biographers, of becoming enamoured of those of whom they write.

The spirit of research, however, was not entirely dormant even in that century. Editors and biographers did look around for anything that would easily present itself: nor can what they observed be said to have been wholly unimportant, for they brought to light one piece of evidence which deserves to be received with the same confidence which the testimony of Pope himself receives at our hands. This comes from a certain Mr. Potenger, who called himself a cousin of Pope. He gave the information to Dr. Bolton, who was Dean of Carlisle, who communicated it to Dr. Joseph Warton,

from whom we receive it. His information was to this effect:—That the Poet's grandfather was a clergyman in Hampshire: that the Poet's father was the younger of two sons, and was sent to Lisbon to be placed in a mercantile house: that there he left the Church of England and became a Roman Catholic: that he knew nothing of the "fine pedigree" which his cousin Pope set up, and that as to a descent from the Earls of Downe, he was confident no such descent could be proved, for if it had been so, he must have heard of it from a maiden aunt, who stood in the same degree of relationship to Pope and to himself, who was a great genealogist, excessively fond of talking of her family, and who most certainly, therefore, would have spoken of this descent if it were so. This is the substance of Mr. Potenger's valuable information, as it has been received and incorporated by Roscoe and others of the late writers on the life of Pope. Mr. Potenger, however, in one respect does some injustice to the Poet's memory. Mr. Pope nowhere says that he descended of an Earl of Downe, but only that he was of the same family as that from which the Earl of Downe sprang; which is quite a different thing, and probably true.

My own researches have done something to enable me to extend the very limited information we possess on this subject: not much, perhaps, it will be thought, but it will be sound as far as it goes, and will be presented in the simple guise of truth, with no intention of unduly magnifying or unfairly weakening the claim set up by the Poet himself. He having made the claim to be "of gentle blood," beside the interest which belongs to the question as part of the Poet's history, his truthfulness and honour may be said to be involved in it, points of even more importance than his wonderful moral sagacity, and the unrivalled felicity of his numbers.

I treat of the two families apart.

I. THE POPES.

Alexander Pope, the Poet's father, if he was seventy-four or seventy-five at the time of his death in 1717, may be presumed to have been born in 1641 or 1642. He was a younger son, and is said by P. T. to have been a posthumous child, and that while his elder brother, who inherited the larger share of the family property, was sent to Oxford, where he died, he was brought up to commerce. It has never been shown by whom this arrangement was made, for before his birth, his father (of whom afterwards), according to the letter to Curl, was dead: and if not dead, he died when his son was quite an infant. All accounts agree that he was sent abroad to complete his mercantile education—an expensive course, which of itself shows that he was of no very mean stock, and that, though the younger son of a widow, his relatives had the means of giving him a fair start in life.

There are, as we have seen, two opposing accounts from persons who professed to know the facts respecting the place to which he was sent, one stating it to be Flanders, the other, with more of probability, Lisbon, with the additional information, that at Lisbon he joined the Roman Catholic Church, or that there, at least, was laid the foundation of the change in his religious profession. From that time there is a blank in his history till his thirty-fifth year, 1677, when he was living in Broad Street, London, where many of the principal merchants of the time resided or carried on their business. This we learn from a 12mo volume, printed for Samuel Lee in that year, entitled *A Collection of the Names of the Merchants living in and about the City of London*. Books of this kind are of some

rarity, being by most persons thought worthless and are destroyed, when superseded by others of a later date. I have a copy which has survived the general wreck, and has been long in my possession. I copy from it the names of three Popes who occur in the list:—

JAMES POPE, Abchurch Lane.

ALEXANDER POPE, Broad Street,

JOSEPH POPE, Redriff.

There can be no reasonable doubt that Alexander is the Poet's father; and it is worth observation that this is a list of "merchants" properly so called—persons engaged in the higher walks of commerce. The number of the names is about 1770. Hence we must infer that the Poet's father was not, at that time at least, pursuing any low or mean occupation, but one in which in those days it was not unusual to place the younger sons of gentry, and sometimes even of the nobility of the land.

He was then, or very soon after, married, not to the mother of his celebrated son, but to a former wife, whose name was Magdalen, but whose surname is at present unknown. This is a recent discovery of some one whose curiosity has led him to consult the register of St. Benet Fink, the parish in which part of Broad Street is situated, where this entry was found:—
—"1679, August 12. bur. Magdalen, wife of Alexander Pope." She left him one child, a daughter named Magdalen, afterwards Mrs. Racket, whose sons were the Poet's heirs.

The next event (after another period marked by no incidents with which we are acquainted) is his marriage with Edith Turner, his second wife. This may be presumed to have taken place in 1686 or 1687, the only child, the Poet, having been born in May or June, 1688. Authorities differ respect-

ing the day, and also the place, one naming Lombard Street, another Cheapside. The father had, therefore, changed his residence, but was still living among the trading aristocracy, and we have no reason to believe that he had receded from his original position of a London merchant.

He acquired some additional property, perhaps considerable, with his wife Edith. She seems to have been the favourite of her brother, the "general officer in Spain," whatever that phrase may denote,—for Pope says, she inherited from him what remained of the fortunes of the family, and it must have been from him that the elder Alexander Pope acquired the valuable interest he possessed in the manor of Ruston, near Scarborough. They were both of mature age at their marriage. Fixing the time in 1686, he would be, according to his monumental inscription, forty-five, and she forty-four. This change in his position had doubtless something to do with his retirement from business very soon after the Revolution,—perhaps as much as his disgust at the political change which had taken place, or his love of retirement, the motives usually assigned for the step he took.

He did not immediately establish himself in his retreat at Binfield, for Mr. Roscoe in his *Life of the Poet* informs us, that he lived for a while at Kensington. No long interval, however, appears to have elapsed between his final departure from London, and his settlement on a small estate which he bought at Binfield, which is on Windsor Forest, two or three miles from the town of Wokingham.

Commerce has its vicissitudes, and the Poet's father may have had sensible proof of this obvious fact. But there is no evidence, as far as we yet know, that he was ever "unfortunate" in his commercial career. That he did not attain to

great wealth, like many of his contemporaries, is certain; but neither did he, like some others of a more adventurous disposition, sink into despondency. When one of Pope's enemies taunted him with being the son of a person who had been a bankrupt, he calls it a "pitiful untruth," and this at a time when there were many persons living who must have known if it had been so, and many others who would have been glad to propagate the libel. Hearne, who disliked Pope, inserted in his private note-book, for future use if necessary, that his father was "a sort of broken merchant." The truth probably is, that he saved something in his business, and added to it by his marriage; and it is certain that he was able to live for many years an easy disengaged life, and at his death to leave his son £300 or £400 a year.

He made his will on February 9, 1710. I take a few notes of it from Mr. Carruthers's recent publication. He gives to his wife Edith the furniture of her chamber, her rings and jewels, and £20: To his son-in-law Charles Racket and his daughter Magdalen his wife, £5 each, for mourning: All else, including rent-charge out of the manor of Ruston, in Yorkshire, together with lands at Binfield, and at Winsham, in Surrey, to his son Alexander Pope, whom he makes executor. He died in 1717, and the will was proved on the 8th of November in that year.

So far I have had little to do but to repeat what has been previously told by others. But now we come to the question, Who was the Poet's grandfather, the merchant's father? This question, hitherto unresolved, I propose to answer.

When Thomas Warton, in the Appendix to the Life of Sir Thomas Pope, the founder of Trinity College, Oxford, and also the founder of the family of Pope, Earls of Downe, with whom

Pope claimed kindred, enters on the consideration of this question, he admits the probability that such a relationship existed, but professes his utter inability to ascend beyond the father, in pursuit of the Poet's ancestors. The attempt to do so has been made by others, who have brought far less of antiquarianism into literary history than Warton. Mr. Carruthers can find no trace of him. And it may be stated generally, that no one has (publicly at least) made any approach to the determination of the question. Yet this was plainly the first step to be taken in any investigation of the Poet's claim to be of "gentle blood." Literary biography owes much to the Wartons—more than the present writers in this department seem disposed to acknowledge; and it is to a Warton, not Thomas, but his brother, Dr. Joseph Warton, that we owe the hint upon which I have proceeded, and, as I believe, settled the question for ever.

Dr. Warton, we have seen, in his *Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope*, 1780, vol. ii., informs us, that he learned from Dr. Bolton, Dean of Carlisle, that he had heard from a Mr. Potenger, a cousin of Pope, that Pope's grandfather was a *clergyman of the Church of England living in Hampshire*.

This has been accepted by Mr. Roscoe, and others, who have written on the life of Pope since 1780; but, though attempts have been made, no one has hitherto succeeded in establishing the truth of Mr. Potenger's statement, by singling him out from amongst the Hampshire clergy of his time, and showing his position.

In looking over the list of beneficed clergymen in the county of Hants, in the period within which he lived, presented to us by the Book of Compositions for First Fruits, I find *only one*

person of the name of Pope, and his name was Alexander. This of itself would be sufficient to support Mr. Potenger's account; and to set before us the person for whom search has before been unsuccessfully made. Then as to his residence and position in the Church, we find in these books of Compositions :—

1. On the 31st of January, 1631, Alexander Pope compounded for the first fruits of the rectory of Thruxton, in the county of Hants.

2. On November 23, 1633, he compounded for the first fruits of the prebend of Middleton.

3. And on May 23, 1639, for the first fruits of the prebend of Ichen-Abbots.

As he held Thruxton till his death, he must be considered in the light of a clergyman possessed of good preferment, in fact, as belonging to the superior class of the clergy in the diocese of Winchester.

Thruxton is a rectory in the neighbourhood of Andover; and Ichen-Abbots is in Bountesborough hundred, a few miles north of Winchester. Why this living and Middleton are called prebends, the only livings in the county so designated, we shall know better when the labours of some sufficient topographer have been directed upon Hampshire.

The next step was to ascertain whether anything respecting himself or his family could be found at Thruxton; and in this inquiry I received the most obliging attention from the officiating minister, who examined the church and went through the register to see whether any memorial existed of persons of the name of Pope. The result was less satisfactory than I had hoped: for it appears that there is no memorial of him in the church, and the register supplies us with no

information touching himself or family, except the following entry amongst the burials :—

“1645. February 21.—Alexander Pope, minister of Thruxton, was buried.”

This, however, is of value. It shows us that he held not his living long, about fourteen years; that he probably died in middle life; and that his son Alexander, the merchant, could have been no more than a very young child when he lost his parent. It does not show us that he was actually a posthumous child; but then there is a possibility that the inscription on his monument, which is expressed in too general terms, may not be strictly correct in setting forth his age at the time of his death. However, the difference is not great between his being literally a posthumous child, and an infant of two or three years old when he lost his father.

But it may be asked, since Pope must have known perfectly well the name and highly respectable position in life of his grandfather, why he did not come boldly forward and claim to be descended of a clergyman born in the reign of Elizabeth, and dying in the prime of life, when occupying so good a position? It would have been a more sufficient answer to the taunt of obscure birth, and have shown to the world his descent, if not from a great, yet from a cultivated, ancestry.

It is, perhaps, idle to attempt to divine the cause, but it is no unreasonable conjecture that here his religious, or rather ecclesiastical, opinions came into play, and that he, a Roman Catholic, would not regard with the same satisfaction as others would, a descent from a Protestant clergyman, a *married priest*, nor would be over solicitous that others should know, on his authority, that his father was the offspring of such an unhallowed union—that is, as he would esteem it.

But what if it should turn out that this clergyman was not only a Protestant minister possessed of considerable preference, but that he also belonged to that section of the Church of England which was the most remote from the Church of Rome, and which held it in especial abhorrence? That he was either the son-in-law or the grandson of one who is always placed in the first rank of the Puritan ministers of the reign of Elizabeth, the noted and long-lived John Dodd, of Fawsley, in Northamptonshire?

I shall first state a few well-established matters of fact, and then the probable inferences to be drawn from them.

I refer, first, to the will of Robert Barcroft, of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, D.D., made on the 29th of April, 1627. He gives "to his godson, John Wilkins, Zanchi's Works, so many as I have, to be delivered to his father-in-law, Mr. Alexander Pope, for his use." Wilkins was then a boy; and Wood informs us (*Ath. Oxon.* ii. 105) that he was the son of a Walter Wilkins, a goldsmith of Oxford, and that his mother was one of the daughters of Dodd of Fawsley, where Wilkins was born. Further, that Wilkins was uterine brother to Dr. Walter Pope, who, in his *Life of Bishop Seth Ward*, speaks of this relationship. Wilkins was the Bishop of Chester of that name, and one of the founders of the Royal Society.

Wood appears not to have known, any more than his informant Aubrey, that Alexander was the name of Pope, the father-in-law (which here means stepfather) of Wilkins; and neither has Dr. Walter Pope, Aubrey, or Anthony Wood, told us anything about him. The question is, Was *this* Alexander Pope, of Dr. Barcroft's will, the Alexander Pope who died rector of Thruxton? Was he the father of the

rector, or was there, in 1627, two Alexander Popes, both clergymen connected with Oxford, but not nearly connected with each other? A little further light, which possibly the records of the University of Oxford might supply, may enable some one to dispose of these questions. All I at present venture to say is, that the probabilities seem to incline in favour of the supposition that the Alexander Pope who was instituted to the rectory of Thruxton in 1631, is the Alexander Pope named in Dr. Barcroft's will in 1627, and consequently the Alexander Pope who married the widow of Walter Wilkins. But then I should propose a further conjecture (in questions such as these we must allow conjectures, and bear to hear of probabilities), that there was a second marriage of the Rector of Thruxton, of which the Poet's father was the issue, and that Dr. Walter Pope, the poet and miscellaneous writer, was the offspring of the first marriage.

Yet I state this dubiously; and, considering how much we know of Dr. Walter Pope and of Bishop Wilkins, find it difficult to reconcile the want of any trace of family connection between them and the Poet, with the supposition that Dr. Walter Pope was half-brother to the London merchant. Perhaps, after all, there were two Alexanders connected with Oxford, and Dr. Walter Pope, the child of the one, father or uncle of the Hampshire clergyman.

It is to be regretted that more has not been preserved of what Mr. Potenger could have told of the Popes, from recollections of the conversations of the maiden aunt, who must have been sister to the Rector of Thruxton; and as she stood, as he informs us, in the same degree of relationship to Pope and to himself, it would follow that the father or mother of Mr. Potenger was issue of another sister or brother of the Rector

of Thurston. This affords hints as to the course which further inquiry should take; but I cannot pass by the indication which this fact affords of the respectability of the Poet's paternal ancestry: the Potengers of Hampshire and Dorsetshire being descendants of Dr. John Potenger, the celebrated headmaster of the Winchester College School, whose son John Potenger, born in 1647, was Comptroller of the Pipe.¹

There were certain peculiarities which remove Dodd from the position of one of the crowd of Puritan divines: a certain cheerfulness, hilarity, and also good practical common sense; and certainly his descendant, Dr. Walter Pope, an ingenious man and no mean poet, is not to be charged with over much of the severity and strictness of the Puritan life. The later Pope, however, would not be over forward to reveal his connection with either Dodd or Dr. Walter; else, if he really did descend from one of the many daughters of the Rector of Fawsley, he might have claimed to himself a descent which, on fair evidence, can be traced to the very depths of the antiquity of English families, the Puritan divine being well known to be of the very ancient family of Dodd of Shockledge, in Cheshire. A long account of him is given by Dr. Samuel Clarke.

¹ See *Private Memoirs of John Potenger, Esquire*, edited by his Descendant, C. W. Bingham, M.A. 12mo. 1841. The editor confines himself very much to the one member of the family to whom the memoirs relate; and we have no notice of any connection with the name of Pope, or of any collateral branches of the Potengers. The Mr. Potenger, the friend of the Dean of Carlisle, is reasonably supposed to be Mr. Richard Potenger, who was elected three times member for Reading—1727, 1734, and again in 1735, when he was re-elected, having accepted a Welsh judgeship. Beatson informs us that on November 28, 1739, a new writ was ordered on his death.

We are now prepared to enter upon the question of Pope's descent from a younger son of the family, which was ennobled by the Irish title of Earl of Downe. This was all which he claimed for himself; and I should be unwilling to think him so foolish and disingenuous as to make this assertion without some good grounds; though possibly, if he or his father had collected evidence, they might not have been able to show how specifically they did so descend, with the precision now required by the College of Arms. But probabilities are strongly in favour of the assertion. The title of Earl of Downe did not free the family of Pope from the obscurity in which it had lived till one member of it had become greatly enriched by aiding in the measures which established the Reformation in England. It will be at once perceived, by any one who may look into what is shown respecting them, that Sir Thomas Pope had no grace of ancestry to boast of. His father, whose will we have, is the first of the family of whom anything is known, and the will shows that he was a man of small possessions, living at Deddington, in Oxfordshire. Not that he was quite of the lowest class, as he desires to be buried within the walls of Deddington Church: in fact, he appears to have belonged to the rank of superior yeomanry, families who placed daughters in monasteries and sons in the Church, or sent them to make their fortune in the cities. He made no pretension to the distinction even of a gentleman's coat-armour; for Sir Thomas Pope, when he had acquired wealth, took a grant from Barker in 1535. Warton has traced his course with some assiduity; but we may compare with what he says the evidence of a person who had good means of knowing Sir Thomas Pope's circumstances. "He was the son of a poor and mean man in Deddington, in Oxfordshire, within four

miles of Banbury, and over against Somerton, and was born there; was brought up, when a boy, as a scribe and clerk by Mr. John Croke, one of the Six Clerks when Wolsey was Chancellor, and so lived with Mr. Croke till after the Suppression. The Lord Audley made a motion to Mr. Croke to help him to some ready and expert clerk, to employ in the King's service about the Suppression business; and Mr. Croke preferred Thomas Pope unto him, being then his household servant in livery, which was the first step of all his following good fortunes. This Mr. Croke was my wife's great-grandfather; and I have heard her grandfather, Sir John Croke, often say, that at his christening, Thomas Pope, then his father's man, carried the bason; and Sir Thomas Pope, by his will, gave this Sir John Croke some of his best raiment as a token of his love unto the house and family."

Previously to the time when Sir Thomas Pope made the acquisitions, the greater part of which he disposed of so nobly in the foundation of his college at Oxford, his family made no marriages with the higher gentry. In short, there is nothing to interfere with the probability of the Rector of Thruxton being of a branch of the family, nor anything in it which the Downe family could look upon as degrading. We must not suffer the glare of the coronet to mislead us: we are speaking of times before the Popes were ennobled.

The Earls of Downe were one of the many families who rose into distinction out of the spoils of the ancient Church; but the rank given to them, and the wealth they possessed, to say nothing of any personal merit, would be a reasonable defence for Pope to fall back upon under the circumstances. The earldom, we may observe, had long been extinct. The first earl was the son of John Pope of Wroxton, who was

brother of Sir Thomas (who left no issue). The dignity was created by Charles I. in 1628, not till then. The first peer was succeeded by his grandson, the second earl, who died at Oxford in 1660. This is the earl of whom Pope speaks, whose daughter and heir married the Earl of Lindsey. The third earl was uncle to the second, and in his son, who died in 1668, the title was lost, having existed for forty years only.

We have Pope's direct testimony that his ancestors were of Oxfordshire, and we find them about Oxford in the time of Elizabeth. I think I have said sufficient to show that his claim to a distant kindred with the Popes of Wroxton, raised *per saltum* from the rank of yeomen, is affected with no improbability on the score of disproportion of rank.

The surname of Pope is not uncommon, but chiefly found in the southern counties. No other family of that name, I believe, is ever stated to have claimed consanguinity with the founder of Trinity College and the family of the Earls of Downe.

We proceed now to speak of the Poet's maternal descent.

II. THE TURNERS.

Of gentle blood, part shed in honour's cause,—
Each parent sprung.

In the note on this passage, Pope expresses a kind of preference for his descent on the mother's side, calling the Turners an ancient family, which means that they possessed hereditary wealth through many generations.

Families of really ancient gentry, which, like *birth*, is but a relative term, are generally found recorded in the Visita-

tion Books of the Heralds for the counties in which they dwelt. Whatever antiquity may be claimed for this family, who resided in the county of York, it is certain that no pedigree of them was recorded at any of the Visitations of that county, of which three were held during the time of the Turners' residence, viz., in 1585, 1612, and 1665; in which last year, too, the large list of "Disclaimers" does not contain them. The only assistance we derive from the labours of the heralds is this. In a manuscript lately added to the British Museum (Additional, No. 12,482) a list of persons whom, in 1665, the heralds summoned to appear, or intended to do so, contains the name of "Mr. Turner, of the parish of St. John del Pike, York," who is unquestionably the Poet's grandfather. This indifference to the advantage of making a public record of many facts, interesting at least to their posterity, is not peculiar to this family, but deposes rather unfavourably to the taste and judgment of the persons in whom the representation of a family at such a time vested. It manifests also some want of a disposition to co-operate in an important public institution, unhappily now fallen into desuetude.

There can be no question that the heralds of old time did sometimes record matter, even then of early date, which will not bear the test of comparison with contemporary evidence; but of the generations then existing, or but just passed away, they may be taken as worthy witnesses. And fortunate are those families who have a few generations recorded in the Heralds' books. They are saved thereby a vast amount of research into miscellaneous papers, which, after much labour and expense, may yield data sufficient for the construction of a genealogical system, without security against error. The difficulty of recovering lost portions of family history is far

greater than is imagined by those who have never made the attempt.

In the case before us, it could not be easy to ascend beyond the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the period, emphatically, when the really ancient gentry of the kingdom were either pushed from their pedestals, or obliged to admit new men to share with them the honour and influence which belong to the possession of broad lands and powerful family alliances. In the forty-fifth year of Elizabeth, February 10, 1603, within a few weeks of the close of her reign, a grant was made by the Crown to Lancelot Turner, of the Manor of Towthorpe, in the county of York. He was then residing at Towthorpe, for on the 12th of December, in that year, 1603, it was certified by William Bainbrigg and R. Aldborough, that "Lancelot Turner, of Towthropp, gentleman, in the wapentake of Bulmer," was for the most part of the year preceding the taxation of the subsidy, and ever since, residing at Towthropp with his family, and is there assessed on goods estimated at £8.

This certificate is valuable, inasmuch as it enables us to decide which of the two Towthorpes in the county of York is the one to which Pope's ancestry in his mother's line is to be traced: Towthorpe, in the wapentake of Buckrose, in the East Riding; or Towthorpe, in the wapentake of Bulmer, in the North Riding. The Turners' Towthorpe is a few miles to the north-east of York, near to Huntingdon, once the abode of Wilfrid Holme, who left the curious metrical account of the Pilgrimage of Grace; and its vicinity to York brought it within reach of the civilization of the northern counties, of which that city was the chief seat.

It is just possible, though hardly probable, that we may ascend a generation above this Lancelot; for, on January 20, 1626, the will of Robert Turner, of Towthroppe, was proved in the court of the Archbishop of York: its date does not appear. He desires to be buried in the churchyard at Huntingdon. He gives to his son Anthony the two younger oxen, with certain husbandry utensils; to his son Richard the red whie, which came from Stockton; and to his grandchild, William Turner, the little brown whie. He makes his wife and his younger son executors. There is no mention of Lancelot, who was, however, dead; but the grandson William may be he whom we shall soon meet, as the nephew of Lancelot, and the father of Edith.

In all probability this Robert was an inferior member of the same family, a small agriculturist, Lancelot being the great man of the family, whose connection with the Popes is quite in proof. He is described as of the city of York, in some documents of the reign of King James. On the 10th of October, 5 James I., 1607, Robert Harrison, Lord Mayor of York, certifies that Lancelot Turner, of the city of York, gentleman, was residing there, and assessed on £10, goods. A like certificate was granted on the 6th of April, in the 8th of James, 1610, signed by Henry Hall, Lord Mayor, and William Robinson, Alderman.

The wapentake of Bulmer is, as respects minute and accurate information, part of the *terra incognita* of Yorkshire. Any tolerable account of the manor of Towthorpe would have shown us something at least of the history of the family who possessed it, and we might reasonably have expected to find some account of the means by which this Lancelot Turner gained the fortune with which he made this and other pur-

chases, and appeared in the rank and position in which we see him by the light afforded by his last will, for we can hardly believe that all he had, came to him by descent. Perhaps as probable a conjecture as is likely to be made is, that he was connected with the Council of the North, or a successful practitioner in that court.

But we go at once to his will, which is dated December 23, 1619. He describes himself Lancelot Turner, of Towthorpe, in the county of York, gentleman. He was then in his last sickness, for the will and a codicil were proved on the 17th of January, 1620, and administration was granted to the executor named therein, on the 20th. He sets out, in the laudable practice of the time, with a profession of faith, and then proceeds to dispose of his temporal estate. He gives, first of all, to his sister, Margaret Stephenson, an annuity of £30, to issue out of his lordship of Towthorpe, and also the use (interest) of £100, which, on her death, is to go to his niece, Elizabeth Huggeson, wife of Nicholas Huggeson. Then, to William Turner, son of his brother Philip Turner, he leaves all the manor of Towthorpe, and lands there; and also a rent-charge of £70 a year, which he has issuing out of the manor of Ruston. He gives £200 to his nephew, Thomas Martin, an apprentice in London, on condition that he release whatever claim he may have to the testator's house in Leeds; and he gives £30 to Margaret Moor, sister of the said Thomas, and wife of William Moor, of Beverley; and £10 to John Hustler, son of his sister Elizabeth Hustler.

We come now to an interesting bequest:—To Thomasine Newton, daughter of Christopher Newton, late of Kilburn, gentleman, an annuity of £50 for life, issuing out of the manor of Towthorpe, with the household stuff at Kilburn, of

which her mother is to have the use during her widowhood, also a livery-cupboard, and a chair, plate, and the green bed. It appears later in the will, that the plate given to her consisted of seven silver bowls, six gilt spoons, one round white salt, and a three-corner trencher salt, and silver porringer to each, and a silver beer-bowl. To his nephew, John Stephenson, he gives all his books, "*except my song-books, which I give to Thomasine Newton.*"

He gives forty shillings to Mr. William Nevil, and to his "good and worthy friend Sir William Alford, a little clock, with a bell and a larum, which I carry about me, and one of my best horses." To the poor of Towthorpe forty shillings. To the poor prisoners in the castle of York, £3. To the poor prisoners in the Kidcote, on Ousebridge, in York, forty shillings. "To the poor of the parish where I am buried, £5." To his servant, Catherine Wetwang, £50, which is partly due to her. To Isabel Fawcet, daughter of Mrs. Kay, wife of Mr. Thomas Kay, of York, merchant, £10. To Robert Siddal, of York, gentleman, forty shillings. He makes his nephew, Willam Turner, the sole executor, who is to have two years to collect his debts. His friend Sir William Ingram, Doctor of the Civil Laws, to be supervisor, and to determine all questions that may arise about the interpretation of his will.

Little more than a fortnight after, namely, on Monday next after Twelfth Day, 1620, he revoked nuncupatively the gift of the clock to Sir William Alford, saying, "he forgets his old friends," and gives it to his nephew William Turner. To this were witnesses Thomasine Newton, Henry Dent, and Alice Atkinson, who depose that William Turner reminded him that there had been much kindness between him and Sir William.

This was a few days before his death. In this codicil he is described of York, so that it was probably made there.

This is evidently the will of a wealthy and considerable person, without children himself, but, having made a fair provision for his sister, establishing his nephew and heir male, William Turner, in the possession of the bulk of his fortune, as intent to maintain the respectability of the family and name. The particular regard he had for Thomasine Newton, is best accounted for by supposing that her mother was a sister of the testator; but it is also pretty evident that it was at that time contemplated that she should become the wife of the nephew William, which she did not long after the death of the uncle. She was the mother of the seventeen children of William Turner, of whom Edith, the mother of Pope, was one. The bequest to her of the song-books is remarkable, as indicating that she manifested thus early something of the poetical temperament, if anything more than music-books is meant. Sir William Alford was owner of the site of the monastery of Meaux, in Holderness. Sir William Ingram was of the family seated at Temple-Newsome; and Mr. William Nevil, an intimate friend of the Turners, in his will, made in 1641, names a number of persons of distinction.

But of this will a more particular account must be given, as showing in what rank of society the parents of Edith moved, and with how much reason the Poet might claim for her that she was, in point of *birth*, equal to the lady (Mary Lepell), whom his adversary, Lord Hervey, had made choice of to be the mother of his children.

April 10, 1641, William Nevil, of the city of York, Esquire, makes his will. To be buried in the church of St. Helen. To Mrs. Elizabeth Stanhope, the eldest daughter of Dr. Stan-

hope, Bishop Hall's Works. "To my funeral expenses, £80; to Mr. William Turner, my godson, £20; and to William Turner, his son, my godson, £10; to Mrs. Turner, his wife, £5, and to the rest of his children £5, to be divided amongst them." To his cousin Thomas Bourchier, £20; to Catherine Penrose the Book of Monuments, and to her sister Elizabeth Penrose the great Bible, and £10 to each. He leaves plate to Lady Osborne and Dame Mary Ingram, wife of Sir Arthur. To Mr. White, St. Bernard's Works, and "what I have of St. Augustine." To Sir John Bourchier's eldest daughter the great gilt salt, and to the second sister a black silk gown. He had been we see the godfather in two generations of the Turners.

The will of Lancelot Turner gives us the name of the father of William Turner, to whom we must now proceed. It was Philip, but beyond the name I have not discovered anything respecting him. Of Christopher Newton, the father of Thomasine, I can only conjecture that he was the Christopher, son of Miles Newton, of Thorpe in Claro wapentake (by Jane his wife, daughter of Ambrose Beckwith, of Stillingflete), who was aged one year and three months at the Visitation of 1585. Supposing this Christopher to be Thomasine's father, which can hardly be doubted, she would be allied, through the Beckwiths, with several of the higher Yorkshire gentry.

William Turner, son of Philip, and nephew and principal heir of Lancelot, is styled by his grandson the Poet, "Esquire." I cannot find that he was ever styled more than "gentleman" in his lifetime, and certainly he does not claim to be more in his last will. He appears to have been young, at least unmarried, in 1620, when, by the death of his uncle, he became lord of the manor of Towthorpe, and possessed of the rent-

charge on the manor of Ruston, and of other considerable property. His birth may be fixed with considerable probability in the year 1600 or 1601, and it could not well be later than 1621 that he took to wife Thomasine Newton, his uncle's favourite, for one son of that marriage was killed in the Civil Wars, and another died in the King's service, that is, we may assume, between 1642 and 1648. It does not appear that William Turner was brought up to any profession, or engaged in any gainful employment. The first notice we have of him, after the date of his marriage, is only gathered inferentially from the history of his children, viz., from the record of the baptisms of four of them, including Edith, in the parish register of Worsborough, in the years 1641-2-3, and 1645.

Where he had been living up to this period, from the time of his succeeding to the family estate, is unknown to me; it might have been at Towthorpe, or at York; but the determination of this point is not beyond the power of a laborious search, which might bring with it the discovery of some particulars concerning his position and character. One thing is certain, that his wife was producing him almost yearly a son or a daughter, as the four children whom we have mentioned were among the latest born of his very numerous family, fourteen daughters and three sons.

Worsborough is a village in the southern part of Yorkshire, on the road from Sheffield to Barnsley, as the turnpike roads formerly were. It is seated near the stream of the Dove, which flows along a dale called Worsborough Dale, where were several homesteads, inhabited by families of the lesser gentry, some of whom could trace themselves from remote ancestors living in the same vicinity. The inhabitants have long been accustomed to point out one particular house, in

which they say the mother of Pope was born. It is called Marrow House; but, whatever may be the evidence for the claim of this particular mansion, there cannot be a doubt that the Poet's grandfather was for some years a parishioner of Worsborough, where we find these entries in the Register of Baptisms:—

1641, Nov. 20. Martha, daughter of Mr. William Turner.

1642, June 18. EDITH, daughter of Mr. William Turner.

1643, Sept. 1. Margaret, daughter of Mr. William Turner.

1645, Nov. 25. Jane, daughter of Mr. William Turner.

Thenceforward we lose the benefit of the testimony of the register.

It will be observed that this was while the Civil Wars were at their height, in which two of the sons died, being on the King's side: not that this affords us any hint or presumption respecting the circumstances which brought Mr. Turner to Worsborough.

Whoever may have been the P. T. who communicated to Curl the particulars before given of the history of the Poet's father and maternal grandfather, they contain, few as they are, one specific statement which tallies with his residence in this part of the county, far from the districts where his estates lay. He was, says P. T., of "Burfit Hall," in Yorkshire. This can be no other place than Birthwaite Hall, at no great distance from Worsborough, but in the parish of Darton. It was the seat of the family of Burdet of Birthwaite—not that of the late Sir Francis Burdett—though Francis was a favourite name with these Yorkshire baronets. At the period with which we are concerned, this Yorkshire family were in great straits, and Birthwaite, in 1643, became the property of an heir of only a year and a half old. Furthermore, their

affairs were placed very much in the hands of their relative, Mr. Rockley, of Rockley, which is in Worsborough; and in the absence of any positive evidence, without any choice but to fall back upon conjecture, or be silent, I would suggest that Mr. Turner's residence in these parts of the West Riding, might arise out of some connection with the affairs of the Rockleys and Burdets. Rockley, like Turner, had two younger sons in the service of King Charles I.¹ At both these houses Mr. Turner would be only a tenant.

At what time he returned to York has not been ascertained. The next thing we know of him is that he was living there, in the parish of St. John del Pike, at the time of the Heralds' Visitation in 1665. Next that he made his will, describing himself "William Turner, senior, of the city of York, gentleman." And, lastly, that in 1671, he, or his son William, was living in the parish of St. John del Pike, in a house with seven hearths, one of the best houses in the parish.

Here, as is usually the case in inquiries of this nature, we gain our best information respecting him from his will, which is of considerable extent. It is dated Sept. 4, 1665. He was then "grown weak and infirm," but still of sound and disposing mind and memory, "humbly imploring Almighty God to bless and prosper these my intentions and bequests." He gives his soul to God, hoping to be saved through the merits of Jesus Christ his Saviour, and his body to be interred with such decency and solemnity as his executors shall approve. He then gives all interest in his messuages in Gotheram Gate, York, to his trusty friends Thomas Thompson, of York, notary public, and Thomas Tomlinson, of the same city, grocer, to

¹ See, for the Rockleys and Burdets, the *History of the Deanery of Doncaster*, vol. ii. pp. 285 and 376.

suffer his dear and loving wife, Thomasine Turner, to take the issues as long as she continues his widow and unmarried ("it being her desire to have no further interest in them than so long as she continues my widow"), and after her death to convey them to his seven daughters:—Alice Mawhood the wife of Richard Mawhood, Elizabeth, Mary, Martha, Edith, Margaret, and Jane Turner, equally amongst them. He then gives his manor of Ruston, with its appurtenances in Ruston, Wickham, and Marton, and a rent-charge out of the said manor, lands, and tithes, of £70, to his wife, so long as she continues his widow, and afterwards to his only son, William Turner, his heirs and assigns, subject nevertheless to the charge heretofore made to my son-in-law Samuel Cooper and Christian his wife and their heirs, and to the further charge that he shall, within a year after he comes into possession, pay the sums hereafter mentioned, namely, to his loving daughter, Thomasine Turner, £50, in full of her filial part; to Martha, John, and William Haitfield, my grandchildren, £50 amongst them; and to his wife £40, which is to be given by her among her seven daughters first named in his will. He gives to the said seven daughters all his money, plate, linen, woollen, pewter, brass, household stuff, goods, chattels, and personal estate, of what kind soever (saving his wife's wearing apparel, rings, and jewels), equally amongst them, for the better augmentation of their portions; desiring and entreating his said wife's great care for their advancement, "considering my kindness and love to her by this my will." He further gives to his son-in-law Cooper and his wife, and to his daughter Thomasine Turner, each twenty shillings, for rings, to wear for his sake. He makes his wife executrix, and desires Thompson and Tomlinson to assist her, to each of whom

he gives a ring. The witnesses were R. Etherington, James Tennant, and Edward Topham.

This will tends to confirm Pope's representation that two of his mother's brothers died in early life. Towthorpe, we see, is not mentioned; probably it had passed from the family: but, on the other hand, there seems to have been some addition made to what Lancelot the uncle had possessed at Ruston. This Ruston (for there are two Rustons as well as two Towthorpes in Yorkshire) is near Scarborough, and Brompton, the ancient seat of the Cayley family, as this will plainly shows, by mentioning as appurtenances, Wickham and Marton, in the same neighbourhood. We have already seen that an interest was possessed here, in 1710, by Alexander Pope, the London merchant, and his son, who seem to have intended to sell it to the Vanden Bempd family.¹ It was a valuable pro-

¹ I infer this from the following letter of Pope's, possibly the only letter of dry business written by him which has been preserved, printed in the book entitled *Additions to the Works of Alexander Pope, Esq.*, 2 vols. 8vo, 1776, vol. ii. p. 30:—"To John Vanden Bempden, Esq., present. Thursday. Sir,—Upon what you told me when I was last to wait on you, I deferred treating further for the rent-charge till you could be more certain what sum you could conveniently raise in present towards the purchase. If there were only three of [*q.* or] four hundred pounds wanting, we would take your bond; for, as to a mortgage on the rent-charge, my father is not qualified to take it, for by an act of parliament he cannot buy land, though he may sell. However, if you desire to make the purchase soon, I believe I have a friend who will lend you the £1000, on the same security you offer us. If you have any scruple, you'll please to tell it me fairly; but, if this purchase be convenient to you, we shall think of treating with no other, and be ready upon your answer; since I think what I here propose, entirely accommodates all the

perty; but we cannot but perceive, when we compare this will with that of Lancelot Turner, that the prosperity of the family had meanwhile declined.

Pope speaks rather magniloquently of the cause of the decline, telling us that "his mother inherited what estate remained after the sequestrations and forfeitures of her family." We are bound to accept this statement; but, in the printed list of compounders, the name of this Mr. Turner does not appear, and I have seen no evidence of any sequestration. In comparing the wills of Lancelot and William, we must not forget that Lancelot's was made at the close of a life passed without children, and William's after he had portioned some of his fourteen daughters, and had others still remaining in his house.

These children of his grandfather were the only relatives of Pope in the preceding generation with whom he appears to have kept up much acquaintance; and after he became distinguished in the world, no particular intimacy existed between him and them. We must except, however, his mother, for whom he entertained the highest respect and affection; and who, he says, had lived with him from the time of his birth, to her death at the age of ninety-three. She survived, as we may easily believe, all her brothers and sisters; and of these it now remains to give such an account as the few memorials of them which have fallen under my notice enable me. They are in no respect interesting except as they

difficulty you seem to be at. I am, Sir, your very humble servant, A. POPE." I conclude this relates to Ruston, the Vanden Bempd's being then accumulating the estate now enjoyed by their descendant, Sir John Vanden Bempd Johnstone, Baronet, whose beautiful seat is at Hackness, near to Ruston.

are connected with the life of Pope, whom it is no exaggeration to designate one of the greatest names among Englishmen, standing, in his own department, with Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, and Dryden,—men of whom, and whose connections, men now desire to know all that can be known.

Of the two Turners, who died in the service of King Charles I., we have no account even of their names. The other son, named William, left England to serve in the Spanish army, which was also the course taken by one of the young Rockleys of Worsborough, his “coetanean,” and probably his friend. He rose in that service to be what Pope calls “a general officer”; which distinction, if it gave him rank like that of a general in the English service, was one that, in such a controversy, Pope was undoubtedly entitled to put forward as an honour to the family. I lament that more has not been discovered concerning him, and more particularly that we have not even that slender piece of autobiography, his will. We know, however, that he retained to the time of his death some portion of the family property, and left it to his sister, Edith Pope, perhaps then the sole survivor.

Of the fourteen daughters, it would seem that some may have died in infancy or in very early life. The General used to speak of his *ten* sisters, and to compare them with the five wise and five foolish virgins, that is, five Roman Catholics, and five of the English Protestant Church; but which, in his opinion, were the wise, and which the foolish, does not appear in the family tradition preserved by John Charles Brooke, Somerset Herald, who was descended of one of them.

To place them in the exact order of seniority is out of our

power, though a more thorough search in the Yorkshire parish registers might enable us to do so.

All we can pretend to is to place them in an order approximate to the truth ; and I need not apprise the reader that where we have to deal with so large a family, there must be a long interval between the elder and the younger. At the birth of Pope, in 1688, his mother was forty-six, and some of his aunts must have been sixty, or thereabouts.

CHRISTIANA is named in her father's will as the wife of Samuel Cooper. She may be presumed to have been one of the elder daughters, her husband having been born in 1609. He was the famous miniature-painter of the name, and was also noted for his skill in music. His father was a professed musician, as we are informed by Aubrey, in his *Natural History of Wiltshire*. His science may possibly have introduced him to the family of Thomasine Turner, to whom, as we have seen, some song-books were bequeathed by her uncle. Walpole knew of Cooper's marriage, and tells us that he lived long in France and Holland ; also, that he died in London, on May 5, 1672, at the age of sixty-three, and was buried in St. Pancras Church. All this may be true ; but when he says—" I have a drawing of Pope's father as he lay dead in his bed, by his brother-in-law, Cooper, which had belonged to Mr. Pope," he must be mistaken, as Pope's father outlived Cooper many years. More probably it was of Pope's grandfather, and Cooper's father-in-law, William Turner. Walpole further informs us that the widow of Cooper received a pension from the Court of France, for whom her husband painted several pieces on a larger scale than he usually adopted.

Mrs. Cooper survived her husband many years. We are

indebted to Mr. Carruthers for notes of her will, which was made on the 16th of May, 1693, and proved on the 28th of August following. She desires to be decently buried in the Church of St. Pancras, as near to her dear husband as may be. She leaves legacies to her sisters, Elizabeth Turner, Alice Mawhood, and Mary Turner; also to her sisters Mace (not Marc, as printed by Mr. Carruthers) and Jane Smith. To her sister Pope she leaves her mother's picture,—(what has become of this?)—a broad piece of gold to her brothers Mace, Calvert, Pope, and Smith; to her nephew and godson, Alexander Pope (then five years old), a china dish with a silver foot, and instruments which had been used by her husband in his art; and, after the death of her sister, Elizabeth Turner, all her books, pictures, and medals. She makes her nephew, Samuel Mawhood, citizen and fishmonger, her sole executor.

It appears that there is or was a monument in the Church of St. Pancras to the memory of the Coopers, with arms of Cooper impaling those usually assigned to the name of Turner.

Mrs. Cooper was one of the five Roman Catholics. It seems probable, though Walpole does not state it, that Cooper was originally a musician by profession, as his father was, who is better known by his Italianized name Coporario.

THOMASINE, named in her father's will, seems to have left the paternal mansion early; for I find a Thomasine Turner living at the west end of Turnmill Street in 1645, when she was assessed one shilling towards the support of Sir Thomas Fairfax's army. In 1642, a receipt had been given to the same person for three shillings assessed upon her for the tenements she holds of Thomas Stokes, gentleman, in the parish of Clerkenwell, for the subsidy of £400,000; and in

another receipt for a very small sum to the same subsidy. It is incidentally noticed on this receipt, that Thomas Stokes was a Papist. It is hardly likely that there should be two Thomasine Turners, unmarried, living at the same time. She seems never to have married, and subscribes her maiden name as a witness to Mr. Cooper's will. I place her among the five Roman Catholic sisters.

ALICE is mentioned in her father's will as the wife of Richard Mawhood. She was one of the elder children, as she was eighty-eight at the time of her death, January 15, 171 $\frac{1}{2}$, and consequently born in 1625. Her husband resided at Ardsley, where he had a good estate, which place being near to Worsborough, we are at no loss to account for the connection thus formed, and may refer it to the period when the family were living at Marrow House, especially as we find that the eldest son, William Mawhood, who succeeded them at Ardsley, was born in 1647, being seventy-eight at the time of his death in 1725; many persons descend from him. But, beside the eldest son, there were eight other children, of whom Samuel, a woollen-draper on Snow Hill, was Mrs. Cooper's executor. One only of these children was a daughter, who lived to the age of eighty-four, dying in 1736, the widow of Thomas Brooke of Doncaster. There was another connection of the Mawhoods with the family of Brooke of Yorkshire, William Brooke of Dodworth having married Alice, daughter of William Mawhood, an alderman of Doncaster (grandson of Richard Mawhood and Alice Turner) by Margaret Mawhood his wife, daughter of William, the eldest son of Richard and Alice. A son of that marriage was John Charles Brooke, the Somerset Herald, a most laborious inquirer into points of genealogy, who has left a large account

of his relations, the Mawhoods, from which more might be extracted were I not, perhaps, too sensible how wearisome genealogical details are to many readers. His inquiries about his ancestors the Turners were less successful. He knew the relationship to Pope, but substitutes for William Turner of York, his contemporary, William Turner of Bilham, near Doncaster, a person of the same rank, but of a totally different family. Mrs. Mawhood may be considered to have remained a Protestant.

ANOTHER DAUGHTER, who must have been among those early born of this prolific bed, seems to have died before her father, who names in his will, Martha, John, and William Haitfield, as his grandchildren.

EDITH, baptized in 1642, is spoken of in her father's will by her maiden name,—in her sister, Mrs. Cooper's will, in 1693, as then the wife of Pope the elder. She died in 1733, the last survivor of the family.

JANE, baptized in 1645, married — Smith. Both were living when Mrs. Cooper made her will in 1693.

ELIZABETH, is named in her father's will, 1665, and her sister Cooper's will, 1693, as unmarried.

MARTHA, baptized 1641, and named in her father's will. Either she or (less probably) her sister Margaret was the wife of — Calvert, who was living in 1693, according to Mrs. Cooper's will. J. C. Brooke says that she was maintained in her old age by her nephew, Captain Charles Mawhood, who resided at Alkley, near Doncaster. She was a Roman Catholic.

MARGARET, baptized 1643. She (or Martha) married a clergyman named Mace. There were several clergymen of that rare name living at York and in the northern part of

Derbyshire. She is named in her father's will, and, with her husband, in her sister Cooper's.

Ten daughters have now been presented before us; but Brooke, who professes to write from the information of the elders of the family, speaks of two others, viz., Mrs. Tomlinson, whom we may suppose to have married in the family of Tomlinson of York, one of the supervisors of Turner's will; and Mrs. Corbet, who he says was one of the five Roman Catholics. She was, I conceive, the Mrs. Corbet on whom Pope wrote what pleased Dr. Johnson most of all his epitaphs.

One of the unmarried daughters, Thomasine, Elizabeth, or Mary, must have been the deformed sister who lived with Mrs. Pope, and who taught her son to read, according to the popular accounts of the Poet.

We have thus accounted for twelve of the fourteen daughters. The remaining two we may well believe died in infancy or early youth.

Whatever excellent qualities Edith may have possessed, it would seem that her literary education was not much superior to that of other young ladies of her time, and inferior to that of many. This is proved by a letter of hers, the only one I believe that is known, printed in the *Additions to the Works of Alexander Pope, Esq.*, 1776, vol. ii. p. 96.¹

The people of York seem not to have been without a due sense of the honour done to their city in having had the

¹ The collection of these pieces is usually attributed to Steevens. But I am in possession of a copy which belonged to a person who claims to be the editor. It is handsomely bound, and has this note in his own handwriting on a fly-leaf of the first volume:—"These collections were made by me from the London Museum, &c., and the Preface written by me, W. C." Lowndes gives this account of the

mother of so great a man residing among them in her youth. In some verses addressed to Lady Irwin, a daughter of the Earl of Carlisle, these lines occur :—

York lent us Pope by th' mother's side :
But from th' paternal, this our pride
Gives Castle Howard : say which here
Illumines most the natal sphere.

On the whole, then, it will appear that Pope descended of a *clerical* family, the members of it being much connected with the University of Oxford ; but that at present we can trace him only to a person of his own name, who was rector of Thruxton and prebendary (if the incumbents are so called) of Middleton and Ichen-Abbots, in the diocese of Winchester : that these, being rather conspicuous pieces of preferment, place him in the higher rank of the clergy of his time, and seem to be but the beginning of the offices he would have held in the Church, had he not died in rather early life, and had not the changes at that time imminent, stopped him in his course :—that, though we cannot ascend beyond him on evidence that would bear a close examination, there is strong presumptive evidence that he was either identical or nearly connected with an Alexander Pope of Oxford, the friend of Dr. Barcroft, and the son-in-law of the famous John Dodd of Fawsley, and the father of Dr. Walter Pope, the Gresham Professor, the Poet, and the miscellaneous writer, who was

book, "culled, says Mr. Park, by Baldwin, from the communications by Mr. Steevens in the *St. James's Chronicle*, and put forth with a Preface by William Cooke, Esq." There is an account of Cooke in the *Biographia Dramatica*, 8vo. 1812. p. 147.

half-brother of Dr. John Wilkins, the Bishop of Chester, who married a sister of the Protector Cromwell:—that there is no reason to believe, on account of disparity of rank, that he was not of the same stock as the Popes, Earls of Downe, but, on the contrary, that nothing can be more probable than that the family tradition was correct, which delivered thus much and no more:—that his Oxfordshire ancestors did spring, as the Earl of Downe did, from people of small account living at Deddington, near Banbury.

And that, on his mother's side, he sprang from persons who had possessed land of their own at Towthorpe, in the North Riding of Yorkshire, from perhaps an early period, but who, from the time of Elizabeth were lords of the manor:—that one of them who died in the reign of James I. was an opulent person, and intimate with some of the principal families in the county:—that he left the greater part of his possessions to his nephew, William Turner, the Poet's grandfather:—that in his hands the family estate did not receive any material additions, and perhaps rather decayed:—that he had the charge of not fewer than seventeen children, nearly all of whom grew to man and woman's estate:—that of the sons, two died during the Civil Wars, in which one of them was slain, and the other went abroad and served in the Spanish army, and at his death gave property, not very inconsiderable remains of the family estate, to Edith Pope, his favourite sister.

And that, this being the case, there is nothing of exaggeration or of boasting, when the Poet has to meet the charge of being of obscure birth, in asserting that he sprang "of gentle blood."

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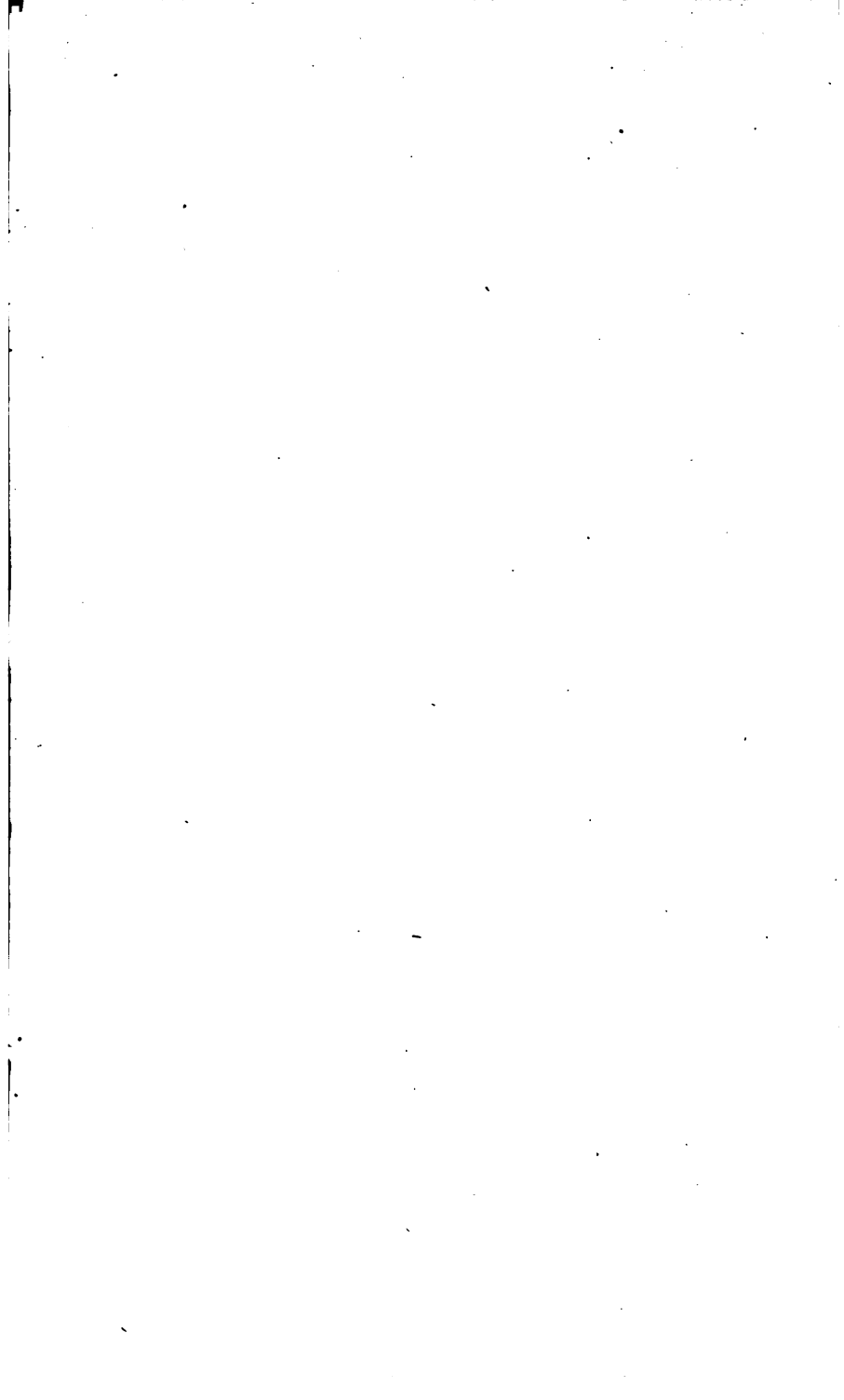
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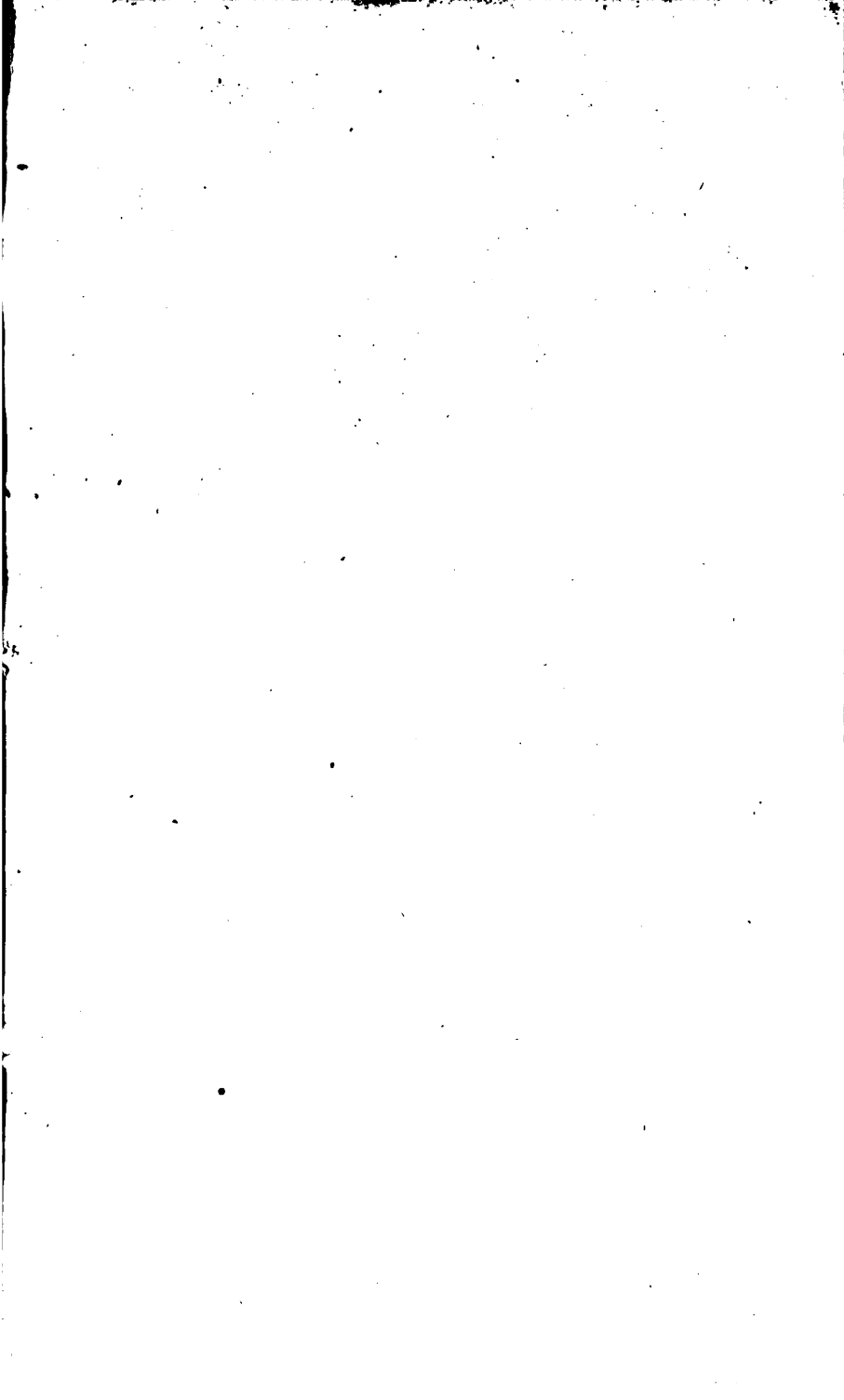
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